

# Library of Michigan

Department of History, Arts and  
Libraries

## LEGISLATIVE AND STATE EMPLOYEE SERVICES NEWSLETTER FALL 2008

### THIS ISSUE: VOTING

<http://michigan.gov/lmtimelytopics>

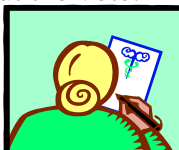
#### Welcome

As Abraham Lincoln said, "The ballot is stronger than the bullet."<sup>1</sup> As the election looms nearer, what topic could be more timely – or important! – than voting? We've put together some materials we hope will inspire us all to get out the vote.

#### Voter, Know Thyself

If a constituent or your Great Aunt Maude can't remember if, or where, they are registered to vote, the Michigan Voter Information Center is the place to go. It provides a vast assortment of information related to voter registration and election administration in Michigan including how to determine if you are registered to vote, finding your polling site, using voting machines and more:

<http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633-49313--,00.html>



#### Voting Methods

Hanging chads, absentee ballots: how votes are cast can stir as much debate as which votes are cast! Read on for some of this election year's bones of contention: *How do other states handle absentee voting or voting by mail?* The Long Distance Voter has put together a handy collection of links on how all of the other states deal with absentee voting. They include deadlines for the next election and state level contact information. Visit

<http://www.longdistancevoter.org/?gclid=CM2XzMvZi5UCFQkmIgodNICIqw>



#### *Why do some advocate voting by mail?*

The Vote By Mail Project assists citizens and lawmakers wishing to expand this option for voters in their states.

<http://www.votebymailproject.org/whyvotebymail.html>

FairVote also lists a few reasons:

<http://www.fairvote.org/turnout/mail.1>



A history of voting machines can be found

[http://www.glencoe.com/sec/socialstudies/btt/election\\_day/history.shtml](http://www.glencoe.com/sec/socialstudies/btt/election_day/history.shtml)

*A Brief Illustrated History of Voting* is a site in progress done by a University of Iowa professor

<http://www.cs.uiowa.edu/~jones/voting/pictures>

#### Statistics

##### *Census Bureau Data*

The U.S. Census Bureau's [Current Population Survey \(CPS\)](#) includes statistics on reported voting and registration by various demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Search recent surveys as well as historical trends, and access estimates and projections of the voting-age population.

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/voting.html>

##### *American National Election Studies*

The American National Election Studies (ANES) produces high quality data on voting, public opinion, and political participation to serve the research needs of social scientists, teachers, students, policy makers and journalists.

<http://www.electionstudies.org>

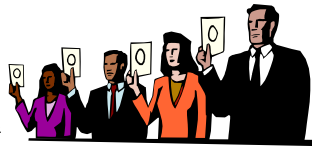
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### ***Project Vote Smart***

Project Vote Smart provides information on elected officials, their voting records, campaign finance data and platforms  
<http://www.votesmart.org>

## **Michigan Data**

### ***Election Results Database***

The Archives of Michigan offers online access to state election data through their Election Results Database. The Precinct Results Databases - used to certify and distribute the official results of each election - were created by the Michigan Bureau of Elections, Department of State, and recently transferred to the Archives of Michigan for permanent preservation. The Archives (in collaboration with the San Diego Supercomputer Center) converted the data from its original format into this search engine for public access. Data for 1992 through 2004 can be searched by year, county, office, city and township. In addition, GIS maps (showing color-coded counties according to party majority) were developed for statewide offices to represent voting trends.

For more information contact Caryn Wojcik, Government Records Archivist at (517) 335-8222.

<http://66.84.34.206/mSearch.html>

### ***See Also...***

Another source for Michigan election data is the Michigan Secretary of State Office. It provides access to results back to 1998 at [http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633\\_8722---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633_8722---,00.html)

## **Researching the Issues**

### ***CQ Researcher***

*CQ Researcher* has published 194 issues over the years related to voting. In 2008 alone there were reports on the changing U.S. electorate and separate reports on women and race in politics. These may be accessed through the Library's subscription at <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher> on your office computers. The ip addresses have been registered for this purpose.

### ***National Conference of State Legislatures***

Don't forget the State and Federal Issues section of the NCSL Web site. The Elections, Campaigns & Redistricting section provides a bounty of information on the latest voting issues facing state governments.

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/elect/elect.htm>

### ***Retro Research***

Do you remember the Massachusetts Ballot? How about the controversial straw poll of state employees the State Journal conducted in 1956, or the Great Detroit Debacle of



November 3, 1970? The Library of Michigan's **Vertical Files** hold a treasure trove of historic information on voting issues in the state. The files, an accumulation of clippings from the (Lansing) State

Journal, Detroit Free Press and Detroit News are organized by category, and include several files dedicated to voting and elections topics. Items for the Vertical Files were collected primarily from the late 1950's through the mid-1980's, and the subject list of topics covered is vast, filling a two-inch binder. So in addition to elections, it is a great resource for all sorts of Michigan-related research. Keep it in mind!

### ***MeL Special Topic***

You and your constituents should also remember MeL, [www.mel.org](http://www.mel.org), for easy access to a bounty of election-related Internet resources. Find information on voting, ballot language, campaign finance and lobbying disclosure. Research candidates' biographical data, speeches and positions on various issues. Seek neutral analyses on sites from non-partisan organizations.

The link to these resources is in the MeL News section near the bottom of the homepage or click on Featured Resources and scroll down to the Special Topics section.

<sup>1</sup>Speech, May 29, 1856, Bloomington, Illinois